

To: Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy
Cc: CN=Karen Schwinn/OU=R9/O=USEPA/C=US@EPA[]
Bcc: []
From: CN=Tom Hagler/OU=R9/O=USEPA/C=US
Sent: Tue 2/22/2011 3:02:03 AM
Subject: Re: contaminants/restoration

Erika - I had raised the issue of mercury contamination in the Yolo Bypass when we spoke back in DC. In brief, the issue there is that the majority of wetlands restoration in the BDCP is supposed to go into the Yolo Bypass, and it is envisioned that they will flood up the Yolo Bypass more often and for longer periods of time. The problem with this is that the Yolo Bypass is where a lot of the legacy mercury ended up being deposited after it was washed down from the mine areas in the mountains. The Regional Board, in its report that I think I excerpted for you, says directly that the Yolo Bypass, which drains back into the Delta, is already a major source of methyl mercury, and that it will become THE major source if it is flooded up more often or for longer periods. The Delta system is already listed for mercury impairments, and significantly increasing mercury loads would not be a good water quality development.

This is not a new issue or problem. The CALFED Science Program had a whole series of research efforts on it in the late 1990's early 200's. There is a nice 5 or 6 page summary of the problem that came out of CALFED during that period, and I can probably track it down. USGS was a major source of the science on this issue.

I don't believe anyone ever developed a good response to this problem. I'm not saying there isn't one, just that this isn't a case of having a "known solution" in our back pocket that requires only money.

Second topic: There is another concern about water quality and contaminants in the Delta, and that comes from the restoration of the San Joaquin river. Right now, the San Joaquin is basically an ag drain for large parts of the year, and increasing flows will increase ag drainage loads (selenium, pesticides) into the Delta. This concern is exacerbated if you build a peripheral canal, because at that point more San Joaquin River water will enter the Delta than at present (presently, most SJ River water gets picked up at the pumps and sent back to the San Joaquin Valley or to So.Cal.).

I did not raise this San Joaquin issue with you, but Karen may have. I know that when we worked on the Grasslands Bypass project in the late 1990's, we actually made the Project develop a phase in process so that we didn't accidentally cause a big slug of "hot" sediment to get flushed down into the Delta or lower SJ River when we increased flows out of the ag areas. So it isn't a trivial problem.

Hope that helps. If you want more info, let me know. I'm around Tuesday/Wednesday, then up in Sacto. (415)972-3945. Karen is in Baja, with the whales and earthquakes.

-----"Feller, Erika" <Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy>
To: Tom Hagler/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Karen Schwinn/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
From: "Feller, Erika" <Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy>
Date: 02/21/2011 11:36AM
Subject: contaminants/restoration

Tom and Karen,

A couple of times you both have (I believe) mentioned some concerns with habitat restoration and need to consider the presence of contaminants in some of the lands where some might someday want to see

wetlands.

Can you tell me more about this? Where is this most a problem? What sorts of contaminants are we concerned about? What sorts of efforts have been undertaken to date to address this?

Thanks!

-erika

Erika M Feller

Acting Associate Director for Land & Water Ecosystems

White House Council on Environmental Quality

730 Jackson Place NW

Washington, DC 20530

Main L

Direct:

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email: